

Case management

Schools that are effective in gaining an accurate picture of school attendance gather a wide range of information as part of the audit process. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative information from a variety of sources assists schools to plan for improvement.

In most instances, early intervention for individual attendance concerns brings about an improvement. Case management processes should be initiated where:

- Making contact with parents and carers for students who are absent without known reason is not successful in restoring attendance.
- The frequency of non-attendance is high.

This chapter provides schools with a process for intervention in specific attendance concerns and illustrates some examples of case management.

What is case management?

Case management is a process whereby schools engage in an intensive cycle of monitoring, review and planning to assist in meeting the needs of identified students disengaged through non-attendance. The case manager facilitates the process and ensures that input is received from all stakeholders, including students and parents or carers. The frequency of case management meetings varies depending on the level of concern and the need for review. It is imperative that all stakeholders are provided with notes from meetings to ensure all are clear on decided actions and delegated tasks.

Note: There are many different processes that can be used in a case management context. This chapter outlines a common process currently used in Western Australian schools.



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Case management within a whole school context

Schools are responsible for developing and implementing an attendance monitoring and action system for systematic, consistent and effective identification and action for all students with attendance issues.

School processes should reflect the:

- accurate recording and rigorous monitoring of the attendance of all students
- identification of students with attendance issues
- implementation of appropriate strategies to restore regular attendance.

Monitoring individual student attendance issues

Schools must record the attendance of all students as explained in the *Policy and legislation* section of this resource. Accurate record keeping (particularly in high schools where individual subject attendance is usually recorded) is essential in determining patterns of non-attendance for at-risk students.

Parents and carers are required to provide a reason for their child’s non-attendance. The *School Education Act 1999* states that reasons for absences must be provided verbally or in writing by the parent within three school days from the day that the absence started. Schools are required to keep records of these explanations and particular care must be taken to record verbal explanations. If the school believes an acceptable reason for absence in the context of the school is provided, no further action is required.

As part of the monitoring and follow up of student absences, schools will often employ a range of strategies, including:

- notes home to parents or carers
- telephone calls
- home visits by appropriate school personnel
- use of emails or automated text messages to parents.

The role of the teacher in school attendance

While the school principal has overall responsibility for the management of student attendance, every teacher plays a part in supporting regular student attendance.

Effective teachers:

- deliver a stimulating program to meet the learning needs of individual students
- develop positive teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships
- model and demonstrate high attendance expectations
- consider student attendance as a reflection of engagement in class and/or school in general
- use a wide range of teaching tools and strategies
- develop awareness and cultural understandings of the student population
- maintain accurate class records and identify patterns of non-attendance
- mark the class roll every lesson (all teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance for the students they teach - the class roll is a legal document)
- provide accurate classroom attendance information as part of feedback to parents and students
- note reasons for absence in order to follow up student non-attendance
- identify and follow up students who are frequently away.



‘Schools should document all contact made with parents or carers regarding attendance concerns.’

Schools should document all contact made with parents or carers regarding attendance concerns. Schools may wish to use the proformas in Appendices 12, 13 and 14 to document telephone calls and home visits. These records provide a rich source of information and enable the school to demonstrate accountability in following up individual students. Some schools may have the capacity to record personal and/or written contact with parents, carers and students within an electronic administrative system used to monitor and record student attendance.



‘Genuine long-term illness, whilst an acceptable reason for non-attendance, impacts greatly on educational outcomes and these students may require additional support to catch up on key concepts.’

At what point should the school investigate absences further?

If a student’s attendance rate falls below 90 per cent over a 10 week period, the school should investigate the reasons why he or she is not attending school. This is a requirement for public schools as part of the *Student Attendance* policy but is also considered as good practice for all schools. Ideally, follow up of student absence should occur as soon as a concern is recognised as outlined in Diagram 3, *Student attendance, monitoring and intervention – a suggested process*.

Schools often ask if they should follow up *all* students whose attendance falls below a 90 per cent attendance rate in a term. This may depend on the reason given for the absence and a careful analysis of the pattern of non-attendance. Genuine long-term illness for example, whilst an acceptable reason for non-attendance, impacts greatly on educational outcomes and these students may require additional support to catch up. Schools also report situations where parents or carers have provided reasons for their child’s non-attendance but they believe the reasons are not genuine or acceptable. These examples are cases that would benefit from a case management approach.

Stages involved in case management

Effective case management involves a number of stages where the school case manager monitors student attendance and convenes meetings to explore issues, problem solve and plan for improvement.

If all reasonable contact with the parents or carers has failed to result in consistent school attendance, then the designated school case manager should request an attendance interview. The records maintained by the school about individual contact with the parent or carer will assist in identifying key issues to discuss in the first attendance interview.

Who is the case manager?

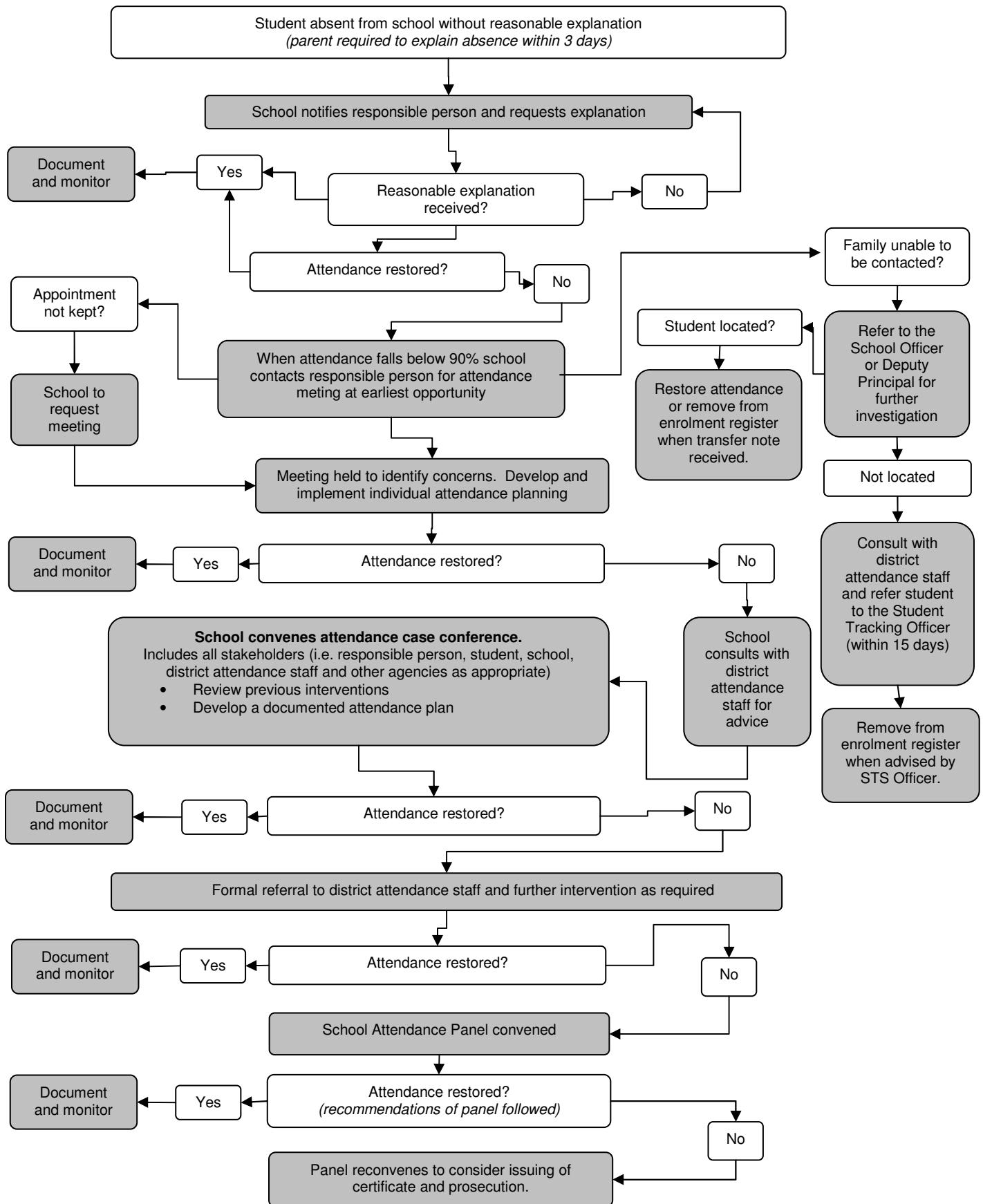
In the initial stages, the classroom teacher (or form teacher in high schools) is usually the case manager. In most schools this person will usually have the role of following up non-attendance and contacting parents or carers where there are concerns. School processes should indicate at what point the case is then allocated to another member of staff for coordination, for example the deputy principal or year coordinator. The clear allocation of a case manager ensures that there is one person within the school who has responsibility for the monitoring and follow up of individual student cases. This person usually coordinates meetings, documents interventions and ensures that strategies are implemented.

Schools wishing to undertake their own professional learning in the area of case management for non-attending students may find the Department of Education and Training resource, *Case Management: a training package for engaging 'non-attending' students (2000)* a valuable reference. The resource is available from local Department of Education and Training district education offices and some schools.



‘The allocation of a case manager ensures that there is one person who is responsible for the monitoring and follow up of individual student cases.’

Diagram 3: Student attendance monitoring and intervention: a suggested process



Attendance interviews – talking about school attendance

When arranging to talk to parents and students about school attendance, it is advisable that a time convenient to both parties is organised. The conversation and the time arranged should be noted. Participation of older students is important. An attendance interview is essentially a parent/teacher meeting to discuss concerns relating to school attendance.

While it is the usual practice for interviews to be held at the school, flexibility is encouraged. It may be more appropriate to hold the meeting at the family home or in a place where the parents/carers feel more comfortable.

Participants at the meeting should be kept to a minimum and be inclusive of immediate family members and the class teacher (or form teacher/year coordinator in a high school). Schools should be mindful of cultural considerations and, for example, ensure the attendance of an Aboriginal worker where the student is Aboriginal. The student and a representative from administration may attend at this stage if appropriate.

Often non-attendance can be overcome at this stage. However, if the issues for non-attendance are significant and it is considered that more stakeholders need to be involved, it may be preferable to convene a meeting with a larger number of people. Schools often refer to these meetings as case conferences. The planning process is the same.

The attendance interview is essentially a conversation to:

- identify reasons for non-attendance
- assess assistance and resources required to re-establish school attendance
- develop and document a plan for attendance improvement.



‘It may be more appropriate to hold the meeting at the family home or in a place where the parents/carers feel more comfortable.’



Doing your homework

Issues relating to school attendance are complex in nature. Poor school attendance is often symptomatic of other issues and leaping into a plan without careful consideration of the situation may result in failure.

Students are absent from school for many reasons and successful interventions start with a complete analysis of available information. Effective case managers ask themselves about the factors that may be influencing school attendance within the student, the family and the school, including their own practice as a classroom teacher.

A thorough analysis of information and a period of self-reflection prior to the initial meeting with the student and parent or carer will lead to a more successful intervention. Not all attendance issues are the same. For example, students who are refusing to attend school because of severe anxiety on separation from the parent or carer will require a very different intervention from a high school student truanting from specific classes. Some cases may require the support of specialist personnel such as the school psychologist or referral beyond the school setting.

Teachers or year coordinators may find questionnaires or checklists useful in gathering information prior or during meetings about student attendance. While teachers are usually able to access quantitative information about student attendance relatively easily, gathering information about why attendance has become a concern is not always so simple. South Australian schools, working with the Child and Student Welfare Directorate of the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services, published a series of prompts for interviews with parents and students. These questions may serve as a starting point for school personnel and may assist in the identification of specific concerns and the development of strategies most likely to succeed. These interview guides for parents and carers (Appendix 15) and students (Appendix 16) can be found at the rear of this chapter. They provide a useful framework for talking to parents, carers and students about school attendance.

In conjunction with information gathered from meetings with students and parents or carers, case managers may find the checklist *Identification of Factors in Non-Attendance* (Appendix 17) useful. The *Attendance and Behaviour Rating Profile* (Appendix 18) may also be of use in documenting broader individual student concerns. These resources are also available at bswb.det.wa.edu.au

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Developing and documenting a plan for attendance improvement

The plan developed as a result of the meeting should be documented. A sample documented attendance plan follows and templates suitable for a range of situations are included in the rear of this chapter (Appendices 19 and 20). Templates are also available electronically as Word documents, giving schools the flexibility to adapt as appropriate.

It is very important to focus on the student's strengths and to identify a time when school attendance was going well. The documented plan may develop from strategies that were in place for the family at a time when attendance was consistent. Schools may wish to draw ideas from Chapter 5, *Improvement strategies*.

As an outcome of the interview, all participants should receive a written plan, which is essentially an agreement for all parties to assist with processes and monitoring of attendance. A review date should also be set to ensure that attendance is continuing, and to address any further hindrances or issues. This review should occur in a timely manner, approximately two weeks after the initial meeting and occur regardless of whether attendance has improved or not. Where attendance has improved this provides an opportunity to celebrate success and reinforce new behaviours. Where attendance continues to be a concern, the plan can be revised or additional stakeholders may need to be involved. A case conference with all parties may be arranged at this point.

Spotlight on school attendance

Building relationships – the classroom teacher makes a difference.

Year 3 student Chris was developing a pattern of arriving quite late to school or not at all. The teacher had seen Chris' mother a couple of times at the end of the school day but it was never the right time to discuss her concerns. Needing to obtain an explanation for some of his absences, the teacher invited Chris' mother to come in after school and talk with her about what they could do to support Chris in the classroom.

Prior to the meeting, the teacher reflected on Chris' absences over the past few weeks. While some notes or verbal reasons for absences had been provided, the teacher had some concerns. She knew there were times when Chris had not had breakfast and at times he did not have lunch. As Chris was an Aboriginal student, the teacher consulted with the school's Aboriginal Islander Education Worker (AIEO) and asked for her support in the meeting.

The teacher and AIEO arranged for Chris and his younger siblings to be supervised by a staff member after school so there would be fewer distractions. The teacher talked about how Chris was going at school and how she was concerned that his lateness and absences were affecting his achievement in the classroom. Chris' mother eventually confided that things had become difficult financially at home as her relationship had broken down and there wasn't enough money to go around. Whilst recognising that education was important, she sometimes didn't send Chris to school as she was too embarrassed that he had not eaten breakfast. Sometimes they fought about him going to school and it became too difficult. The AIEO talked about the importance of attending school every day and being on time and suggested that Chris have breakfast at school each morning as the school was running a breakfast program. The teacher offered to arrange an appointment for Chris' mother with Centrelink to discuss any financial support the family might be entitled to.

Chris was brought into the meeting and the group discussed a reward system to encourage him to attend school every day. The teacher arranged to keep a chart for Chris so he could graph his attendance and keep him motivated. Chris' teacher documented everyone's actions and arranged to meet again in a couple of weeks.

Chris' teacher, the AIEO and mother met together again in two weeks time although they had seen each other incidentally since the first meeting. Although Chris had had one day off school he had been at school on time on the other days and participating in the breakfast program. He had received a small reward for improved attendance and his mother had sought additional financial assistance. Whilst Chris' situation still required close monitoring, a comfortable relationship between the parties was well established and all felt they could communicate early if problems continued to arise.

Sample documented attendance plan

Student Name: <i>Christopher Smith</i>	Year: <i>3</i>
Parents/carers: <i>Sharon Smith</i>	Class teacher: <i>Mrs Lyn Fisher</i>
School: <i>Perth District High School</i>	Date: <i>6 July 2008</i>

Description of current attendance concerns:

Christopher is consistently late to school most mornings by up to 45 minutes, impacting on his participation in the class literacy program. In more recent times he has not arrived at school until recess time.

Factors contributing to attendance concern:

Mother reports that Chris often sleeps in and takes a long time to get ready in the mornings, meaning the family are very rushed. Recent family breakdown has contributed to extreme financial stress. It has been difficult to get Chris organised and provide breakfast on some days. Sometimes there is not enough money for lunches.

Target for achievement:

For Chris to arrive at school before the bell each day, ready for learning.

Changes required to the learning environment:

- School breakfast program option available for Chris each day encouraging earlier arrival.*
- AEO to check in with Chris each morning and make contact with mother if he has not arrived. Determine if lunch is required and arrange if necessary.*

Plan for positive feedback:

- Teacher to set up a chart to graph daily attendance with Chris.*
- Sticker for arrival on time to school, end of week reward (certificate).*
- Reward from mum at home for getting ready for school independently.*

Additional support options:

- Mother to seek appointment with Centrelink social worker for additional assistance. AEO can help with this if required.*
- Use of school volunteer to give Chris some 'one on one' oral reading time twice per week.*

Review process:

Meet together again (including Chris) at end of term (25 July) after school, to discuss progress.



Attendance case conferences

Where home visits, ongoing attempts at communication with parents by the classroom teacher or year coordinator, an attendance interview and the development of a documented plan has not resulted in an improvement in attendance, schools may wish to arrange a more formal case conference with a specific focus on school attendance.

Attendance case conferences are utilised by schools at a number of different levels. Initially, conferences may consist only of school based personnel and involve parents, the student, teacher, Aboriginal and Islander education officer (AIEO), year coordinator or deputy principal. Conferences may also involve other agencies involved with the family such as the Department for Child Protection or Disability Services Commission and/or other specialist personnel such as the school psychologist or school nurse.

Regardless of the level of the case conference, the process is the same and involves key stakeholders in discussing concerns and developing solutions to the problem. Schools should have staff with sufficient skills and abilities to facilitate conferences, however if the attendance concern is persistent and chronic, conferences are often held with the assistance of personnel outside the school such as the school psychologist or local district education office.

Officers with attendance responsibilities at district education offices have a range of titles including district attendance coordinator, retention and participation coordinator and participation coordinator (for 16 and 17 year olds). Officers may offer the school further advice, agree to attend a case conference at the school or facilitate the meeting if the situation is chronic. See Chapter 6, *Key partnerships*.

Attendance case conferences are inclusive of the family, the school and the community in the decision making and planning process. The main emphasis should be on changing the culture of non-attendance and where the situation is chronic, ensuring the parents/carers are fully aware that persistent non-attendance is in breach of the law. It should be explained that there is a legal process in place for addressing persistent non-attendance but this should not be used as a threat in the conference.

The success of any case conference will be contingent on a documented attendance plan which is constructive, supportive and practical. The plan is drawn up at the time of the conference and should be signed by all parties.

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The extent of planning and documentation for attendance case conferences will depend on the complexity and seriousness of the issue. A sample plan is included in the following pages with the template included in the rear of this chapter (Appendix 21). The electronic version of this template is available as a Word document at bswb.det.wa.edu.au. Schools are encouraged to adapt as required.

Process for arranging attendance case conferences

The school organises the attendance case conference in the first instance. For subsequent meetings that may have progressed to a higher level, the assistance of the district attendance coordinator may be required. Depending on the situation it may be desirable to hold the conference away from the school in a neutral venue which provides a non-threatening environment. Arrange an interpreter or cultural consultant if required.

Participants

Attendance concerns requiring support beyond what can be provided at a school level should ideally include **no more** than three school or district staff and **no more** than three agency/community representatives selected from the list below. The school should invite participants who will be able to provide informed and meaningful input, and if possible, be from the same cultural background as the student. It should be emphasised that the conference is a supportive strategy and not punitive in any way.

Parents/carers must be consulted about the inclusion of other agencies. Permission should be sought for agency inclusion with an emphasis on providing support to the family.

FAMILY	SCHOOL	COMMUNITY
Parents or carers	School administration	Police, Corrective Services, DCP, Centrelink
Student	District representative (e.g. district attendance coordinator, school psychologist, social worker, Aboriginal liaison officer)	Representative of District Council for Aboriginal Education
Other family support person if required	Class teacher	Local Aboriginal organisation
	Aboriginal worker/youth support worker	Significant community member or elder

Action prior to the attendance case conference

- It is recommended that the school have had contact with the parents or carers prior to the attendance case conference. Communication requesting attendance at the conference should be in writing but should also be discussed via telephone contact or a home visit.
- Conference members will be contacted by the school with assistance from the district attendance coordinator (if required).
- It is advisable to have alternative times set up in case the original appointment time is not suitable. Conference members will have been pre-advised of these times to ensure their availability.
- The school should contact the parents or carers the day prior to the conference to ensure they are able to attend and to offer transport if needed.

Conducting the attendance case conference

The conference should be conducted along the lines of an interagency case conference. Participants should be seated around the meeting table, with a chairperson facilitating the process and a note-taker selected. The notes and the plan may be handwritten or typed on a laptop computer.

It is important that the family feel safe (which includes feeling supported in an atmosphere that is accepting and non-judgmental) so seating arrangements and communication should be emotionally supportive and culturally appropriate. The family support person may play an advocacy role on behalf of the family.

Introductions, expectations, ground rules and confidentiality are explained by the chairperson. A timeframe for the meeting is also established. It is to be noted that each meeting will be different but a realistic timeframe for an attendance case conference would be approximately one hour.

Each person present has an opportunity to discuss the factors that may be contributing to poor attendance:

- The school should provide all documentation related to the student's non-attendance.
- The family members are invited to contribute any other additional information and ask questions of conference members.
- Conference members may offer further information as appropriate.

- A plan to improve attendance is established (refer to the Individual Attendance Plan proforma in the appendices). The plan may include the family seeking the support of other agencies or community members.
- Key stakeholders for implementation of the plan are identified.
- Positive reinforcement and celebration of any success should be an integral part of the plan.
- Timeframes for implementation and review are set.
- All relevant participants sign the plan. It is important to ensure that the parents/carers understand and agree with the plan before signing. This may require time to be set aside for the appropriate person to explain clearly what is required. Ensure that this step is done with sensitivity and awareness. It is pointless having the parents/carers or the student commit to a plan they either don't understand or don't support.

If this previous stage becomes time consuming, it may need to be completed after the conference. It is important not to compromise effective planning for expediency.

Ensure a copy of the plan and notes of the meeting are distributed to all participants. It is preferable to do this at the time of the attendance case conference if possible.

Action following the attendance case conference

As soon as possible, the school should conduct a follow-up home visit or phone call as appropriate to review the conference process and to support the family with the implementation of the documented plan for attendance. The case manager should also monitor strategies agreed to be implemented by school personnel.

The documented plan for attendance should continue to be monitored and reviewed by the school.

If there is a significant improvement in attendance this should be acknowledged and celebrated according to normal school practice, eg. certificate of achievement, presentation at school assembly, letter and/or certificate of appreciation to the family.

If continued absenteeism cannot be explained following the informal level of an attendance case conference, the school should consult further with the local district education office's attendance staff.



Spotlight on school attendance

Schools, parents and agencies work together to tackle truancy

Tina was in Year 10 and a habitual truant, arriving at school every day and then disappearing soon after. As per the school policy, letters had been sent regularly to Tina's parents, informing them of Tina's absences from school and requesting an explanation. The year coordinator had met with Tina's parents and Tina and an Individual Attendance Plan had been developed with daily monitoring of attendance. Improvement was noted but only for a short period of time. Tina's parents were frustrated. They were experiencing difficulty in managing Tina at home as well and concerned that Tina was getting in trouble with the law with the police bringing her home late one evening after a party.

The year coordinator arranged an attendance case conference at the school with the parents, Tina, the local community based police officer, the school psychologist and the Department for Child Protection (DCP). Prior to the meeting, the year coordinator met with Tina to discuss the situation in more detail, ensuring that he had a good understanding about things from her point of view. He also analysed Tina's attendance data closely, looking for patterns in her truanting. He sought permission from Tina's parents for the attendance of the police, school psychologist and DCP at the case conference who were unsure but open to the possibility of additional support.

At the meeting, the year coordinator outlined the school's concerns and discussed Tina's pattern of truanting. Tina's parents expressed their frustration with Tina's behaviour in general and felt powerless to make a difference. They felt they were doing the best they could and although they were now grateful to get daily feedback as to Tina's attendance instead of a letter some days later, they felt that more strategies needed to be put in place.

Tina indicated that she truanted with a particular friend in one class and whilst she wanted to do better, found it difficult to say 'no'. They usually went to the shopping centre across the road. She was 'bored' with a particular class but agreed that in fact, she had missed so much work that she didn't understand the subject. She did like the teacher but felt it was easier to not be there than to have the others see that she didn't understand the work.

The year coordinator suggested that the daily monitoring continue with Tina reporting to him to get her card signed just before the particular subject each day. Her

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documented plan for attendance included getting the card signed by each subject teacher throughout the day. He agreed to speak to the subject teacher about spending a bit more time with Tina and assisting her in the classroom. She was to sit away from her friend in the classroom. The school psychologist offered to meet with Tina to develop some longer term goals for work and education and assist her in strategies to resist her friend's encouragement to truant. Tina agreed to this and expressed a desire to complete some work experience in the future. The police talked to Tina and her parents about some of the longer term consequences of her risk taking behaviour and suggested some out of school activities that Tina and her friends may have been interested in (and her parents were happy with). DCP talked to the parents about a specific course they were running in the area for parents of adolescent children and offered Tina's parents additional support and reading materials. The year coordinator also volunteered to speak with the shopping centre about serving school aged students during school time.

The strategies were documented on the appropriate proforma and a review date was set for the parents and Tina with the year coordinator.

One month later, Tina was still finding it difficult to resist her friend's encouragement to truant but after completing some work experience at the local hairdressing salon, felt like she had some goals for herself in relation to education. Tina acknowledged that having to meet every day with the year coordinator made it more difficult to 'wag'. She also knew that her parents would find out promptly and she would be 'grounded' from seeing her friends on the weekend. Tina's relationship with her parents had improved and she felt as though they were listening more to each other since completing the course with DCP. Tina's attendance in each subject became much more regular and she agreed that although it wasn't easy, school was a much better place to be.

Documented plan for attendance - case conference record and plan

Surname:	<i>Jones</i>	School:	<i>Perth DHS</i>	ATTENDANCE STATEMENT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline (percentage over specific timeframe, e.g. 35% Term 1 2007) Target (as above, e.g. 70% Weeks 1-4 Term 2 2007) <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <i>Term 2, 50% attendance. 4 half days explained, remainder acknowledged as truanting.</i> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <i>Term 3, all absences should be explained.</i> </div>
First name/Year level	<i>Tina, Year 10</i>	Date of meeting:	<i>10.6.07</i>	
First name/Year level		Time of meeting:	<i>10.00am</i>	
First name/Year level		Place of meeting:	<i>Conference Room</i>	
Parent/Carers' names:	<i>Rob and Sue Jones</i>	Chairperson:	<i>Sharon Peters</i>	
Family Support person:		Note-taker:	<i>Nicole Green</i>	

PARTICIPANT	AGENCY/RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NO.	EMAIL	ATTENDANCE (describe involvement if not attending case conference)
<i>Tina Jones</i>	<i>Student</i>			
<i>Rob and Sue Jones</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>9448 2793</i>	<i>rs.jones@westnet.com.au</i>	
<i>Sharon Peters</i>	<i>Year 10 Coordinator</i>	<i>9447 9324 (Perth DHS)</i>	<i>Sharon.peters@detwa.edu.au</i>	
<i>Nicole Green</i>	<i>School Psychologist</i>	<i>9447 9324 (Perth DHS)</i>	<i>Nicole.greendetwa.edu.au</i>	
<i>Andrew Timms</i>	<i>Community Policing</i>	<i>0417 919 095</i>	<i>Andrew.timms@police.wa.gov.au</i>	
<i>David Leroy</i>	<i>Social Worker, DCP</i>	<i>9330 5496</i>	<i>d.leroy@dcp.wa.gov.au</i>	

Attendance case conference notes

Daily attendance recorded at form group. Truancy noted from approximately Period 2 onwards. Started beginning of term 2; pattern has worsened.

Parents report some behavioural concerns at home. Problems with preventing Tina from going out. Willing to negotiate but recent party resulted in Tina being brought home by police. Parents concerned about safety and behaviour of peers. Little communication; need to know where parties are, if parents will be there, etc. Concerned about truancy, were not aware at all until school letters received. Felt that they needed to know much earlier. Daily feedback would be better; still felt somewhat powerless to make a difference in attendance at school.

Tina; usually truanted with Tamara. Went to shops, sometimes preferred to stay at school but has become a habit now. School a 'waste of time'. Can't see attendance and future career link.

Community police officer discussed implications of continued truancy and risk taking behaviour at parties. Indicated some activities planned for future for school aged students, Monitored concerts, discos, etc .

DCP advised of 'parenting teenagers' course being run at the school in Term 3. Provided information on usual patterns of development for teenagers.

SPECIFIC TARGET	STRATEGIES	BY WHEN	WHO BY?	MONITORING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased monitoring of Tina by school personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual card system for period by period monitoring, to be signed by each teacher Seek further information about SMS attendance monitoring system for whole school implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately Term 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Peters Ms Peters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tina to report to Ms Peters at the beginning and end of day. Ms Peters to email parent each afternoon if there have been any unexplained absences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General community support for keeping kids in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Peters and principal to talk with shopping centre about serving students during school time without a leave pass To seek more information about a similar initiative from the district education office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Term 3 Term 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Peters and principal Ms Green 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal to liaise with P&C and seek input
Improved parent/student relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCP parenting teens course Increased family outings, dinner, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Term 3 ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr and Mrs Jones Tina and parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCP to provide further information

Signatures:

Review Date : 17 September 2007

Difficult to engage families

Effective schools and teachers work hard to foster high quality relationships with students and parents. In situations where chronic or long term attendance problems exist, there has often been a pattern of a lack of engagement with schools for many years. High levels of transience, negative parental experiences of education and a distrust of government agencies in general often result in difficulties engaging some families.

Schools should take the time to attempt communication with families in a range of supportive and culturally appropriate ways. For many families, the only communication they ever receive from the school relates to negative behaviour or other problems. Some parents are 'on the defensive' as soon as the person on the end of the phone indicates they are from the school and letters home to parents with low levels of literacy may never be opened. Home visits with appropriate members of staff often demonstrate to families that schools care enough to take the time to come to them. In making a home visit, school staff should ensure that someone is always aware of their whereabouts and expected time of return. A mobile phone should be taken and where possible the visit should be made with another staff member.



'Effective schools and teachers work hard to foster high quality relationships with students and parents.'

Specific problems need specific solutions

Effective teachers know that a plan for improving student behaviour does not look the same in every situation. Neither do plans for improving attendance. Teachers developing plans to address difficult behaviour keep accurate records of how often the behaviour occurs, the triggers for the behaviour and whether or not the behaviour impacts on others in the classroom.

Gathering both quantitative (ie WHEN were they not at school?) and qualitative (ie WHY were they not at school?) information is critical to developing the most successful intervention. Continuing to send letters to parents and carers informing them of their child's continued truanting when they have little control over any behaviour themselves may meet the legal requirement of monitoring student attendance but is unlikely to result in an improvement in attendance.

Young carers

There are circumstances where young people are required to support mentally or physically ill parents or their own siblings and as a result, school attendance may be affected. There are an estimated 40, 000 young carers in Western Australia. These young

people have enormous responsibilities, often trying to continue their studies while running a household and providing for the day to day care of a relative. Carers WA provides a range of resources and written information for young carers and those that wish to understand their needs. Follow the links to Young Carers at carerswa.asn.au.

School refusal

School refusal describes students who experience difficulties with school attendance because of severe emotional distress. Students may be absent from school entirely, attend school initially but leave during the day, enter school with severe behaviour problems (eg. clinging, crying, tantrums, refusal to move, running away) or remain at school but in an extremely distressed state.

School refusal differs from truancy in a number of ways but is often not recognised initially by schools:

School Refusal

- Emotional distress
- Parents aware of the absence
- Absence of antisocial behaviour
- Usually stays at home during school hours
- Child usually willing to do schoolwork

Truancy

- Lacks anxiety or fear
- Absence concealed from the parent
- Frequent antisocial behaviours
- Not usually at home during school hours
- Lacks interest in schoolwork

The most effective interventions for school refusal include parental involvement and exposure to school. The longer the child stays out of school, the more difficult it is to facilitate a return.

School refusal is a complex problem and therefore a comprehensive evaluation is recommended. Schools may find the assistance of the school psychologist helpful in making an evaluation and developing an appropriate plan of intervention.

The complexity of the plan will depend on the complexity of the problem; however schools may find the following strategies from school psychologists Meg Stanlake and Debra Moore, helpful as a general guide for less complex cases, especially with primary aged students.

- Establish an agreement/goal with the parents for the child's return to school.
- The child's return may need to be in small steps with consolidation of success at each stage.
- Encourage parents to take a firm and consistent line over keeping to the school return plan.
- The child's distress is likely to increase in the beginning and needs to be managed calmly and praise given when the child succeeds.
- School attendance is non-negotiable.
- Determine a 'drop off' or 'hand over' location.
- Have a nominated staff member greet the student.
- Parent says goodbye and leaves immediately.
- If the child leaves, the parent is to return them promptly.
- If the child is significantly distressed then a 'calm down' activity or area may assist the student to regroup before entering the class.
- If the student won't go to class then an alternative needs to be arranged (secure, no contact with other children, boring, supervised by a calm but 'non-engaging' adult).
- Child receives positive reward for entry to class and participation.
- A reassuring phone call to the parent after separation is often welcomed.



'Encourage parents to take a firm and consistent line over keeping to the school return plan.'



Spotlight on school attendance

Specialist support remedies school refusal

Meg Stanlake is one of the Psychologist in Charge at the Swan Primary Behaviour Centre. Under the auspices of the Department of Education and Training, Primary Behaviour Centres operate a support service for teachers of primary school students displaying severely challenging behaviour. Ms Stanlake shares the case of a Year 3 girl with attendance concerns identified as school refusal. Her name and identifying details have been changed.

“Lara’s mother approached the principal of the school with a request for assistance as she was having difficulty getting her daughter to come to school. She was complaining of illness and escalating to a tantrum if her mother attempted to enforce attendance,” explains Ms Stanlake.

“Lara was the only child of divorced parents. She lived with her mother and had regular visits with her father. Both parents were well educated, held responsible jobs and had maintained a cooperative relationship.”

Ms Stanlake says that the principal reported Lara was bright, well behaved and responsible and a popular student at school. There had been a relatively minor friendship dispute which had coincided with a bout of genuine illness. “This led to some reluctance to return to school and continued complaint of illness, explains Ms Stanlake. “Initially, she was allowed to stay home again under the care of grandparents who reported that she appeared to be fine by mid morning. Heightened anxiety about returning to school was thought to be causing genuine feelings of discomfort and illness.”

Ms Stanlake describes the evaluation of the concern and the subsequent development of a plan of action. “We investigated the dispute with peers at the school. This was approached sensitively and without any focus of blame. The initial discussion with Lara’s mother covered background information, explaining anxiety and school refusal, ‘normalising’ the behaviour and outlining a range of possible strategies. I then held a counselling session with Lara. This was held at school on the understanding that she could go home immediately afterwards. This session covered discussion about peer issues, how she felt when thinking about coming to school, the physical impact of her anxiety including accelerated breathing and increased adrenalin. Lara was taught a strategy for controlling and slowing breathing and a creative imagery relaxation sequence.”

“Lara’s mother approached the principal of the school with a request for assistance as she was having difficulty getting her daughter to come to school. She was complaining of illness and escalating to a tantrum ...”

*Meg Stanlake
Psychologist in Charge
Swan Primary Behaviour Centre
2007*

“Agreement was reached that the father would bring Lara for a few days to defuse the tension that had developed between her mother and herself. A reward system was implemented at home which involved a tick chart of the various tasks to be completed in readiness for school eg. getting out of bed, getting dressed, getting into the car etc. A cumulative goal was set that could be achieved within a couple of days even without 100% cooperation. This was presented to Lara as an acknowledgement of the effort she would need to expend to fight the feelings of discomfort she was experiencing. Arrangements were made for Lara to enter through the office so that she could access support when separating from her father.”

“Lara reported to the office and was met by the Principal. She was given a short period to calm herself then a friend was organised to support her re entry to the classroom. Within a week she was entering the classroom directly and independently and was happy and confident again.”



Students with chronic or frequent physical or mental illness

All enrolled students, including those with chronic long term illness or disability must be given the opportunity to access appropriate educational programs and maintain connections with their school community.

Students who are frequently absent due to illness will require special consideration. In such cases involving parents and appropriate school support services as soon as possible in the problem solving process may ensure students have the opportunity to complete requirements of an appropriate educational program, including assessment tasks.

Through planning for students with chronic or frequent physical or mental illness, it may be agreed that:

- the range of curriculum that the student is attempting be reduced
- if eligible, to be supported by Hospital School Services with the student's teachers providing support in the form of prepared work and assessment of completed tasks
- the student will transfer his or her enrolment to the School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) if they meet enrolment requirements.

Hospital School Services provide support for students enrolled in public and private schools and those admitted to a range of hospital or mental health services. They can be contacted on telephone (08) 9340 8529.

SIDE can be contacted on telephone (08) 9242 6300.

'Students who are frequently absent due to illness will require special consideration.'

Spotlight on school attendance

Supporting students with chronic illness

Hospital School Services (HSS) is a unique service providing educational support for students whose physical or mental health currently prevents them from successfully participating in another educational system. It is one of four Department of Education and Training Statewide Services.

Students in years K-12 come from schools across the state. HSS also provides educational support to a designated group of mature age students.

HSS operates over 30 programs, located across various metropolitan health department settings. Each has different criteria for admission, but most are governed by Department of Health processes. The content and focus of programs also varies according to the nature of each program and the needs and circumstances of students

From the administrative base at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH), Principal Grant Wheatley, and Deputy Principals Liz Hughes and Trevor Briedis provide leadership across all sites. Approximately 60 (many part-time) teaching and school support staff bring to HSS strong interpersonal skills, flexibility and a dedication to students with health related special educational needs. The service is also supported by volunteers.

Maintaining connections with long term enrolled students' schools is integral to academic, social and emotional development. Technology is also a key tool in achieving this.

Grant Wheatley, Principal of Hospital School Services shares one case of a student who was first referred to HSS through the Eating Disorders Team when she was in Year 9. "In addition to her anxiety about school, when she was quite malnourished, she had difficulty participating in the normal school activities. She has had several admissions to hospital and has accessed HSS each time."

Although she had long absences from school, this student was very motivated and was a high achiever academically. Her mother reported it was difficult to find a balance: "She's a perfectionist and she was always doing 120% where 90% or 70% would have been quite sufficient. Leading up to her hospital admission, she had lost perspective as far as what was necessary." Mr Wheatley indicates the student had many issues about returning to her enrolled school from HSS even though she was doing well academically.

Keeping up with the work of her enrolled school was a priority for the student and ongoing communication with them ensured that work was sent into the hospital for her. Apart from the usual secondary teacher access in hospital, it was also possible for HSS to arrange access to additional German tuition needed to assist her with a German assignment that was due while she was in hospital.



‘In addition to regular contact with the enrolled school to provide feedback and report on progress, a joint visit to the school by the HSS teacher and hospital psychologist was arranged.’

“Apart from working with the student on her academic program, the HSS coordinating teacher attended weekly medical meetings at which the student’s physical condition was discussed,” says Mr Wheatley. “This presented an opportunity for important information to be gathered on what activities the student would be able to take part in at school and how much of a work load is possible etc. The HSS coordinating teacher’s attendance at a weekly Eating Disorders Team clinical meeting (including psychiatrists, psychologists) provided information on mental health and educational issues and allowed her to give feedback about school. Regular contact with the enrolled school informed them of the student’s progress and increased the school’s understanding of her current situation.”

In addition to the regular contact with the enrolled school to provide feedback and report on progress, a joint visit to the school by the HSS teacher and team psychologist was arranged. This provided an opportunity to give practical strategies on managing the student and for school staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of the student’s needs.

After discussion with the health teams, parent and enrolled school during her second admission, it was possible to arrange for the student to visit school twice a week to participate in drama classes, in preparation for a production. This had a significant impact on the success of her transition back to her enrolled school on discharge. The student commented, “It seems like a small thing going back to class, but it was actually a huge thing in terms of just going back to school. So when I came back to school totally, it was like nothing had really happened.”

Mr Wheatley indicates that transition to the enrolled school was very successful, particularly after her second stay in hospital. “The student was confident on her return that she had maintained work standards during her hospital admission and teachers at her school were more aware of helpful strategies to support student with her health issues.”

In the longer term, the student is aware of the high expectations she places on herself, “I’m a bit of a perfectionist. So I’d have to go in and sort of do everything perfectly. But then I came into hospital and the teachers were saying, ‘you know it doesn’t HAVE to be perfect...’ I think I’m still a bit like that, but I think about things a bit more realistically now.”

“An established routine is now in place for her continued participation in an educational program while affected by ongoing health related issues,” concludes Mr Wheatley.

Appendix 12: Attendance intervention record

(create a template with school name or letterhead)

Surname:
First Name:
Year:

	% Attendance	Comments (e.g. % authorised vs unauthorised, particular patterns of non-attendance, etc)
Term1		
Term 2		
Term 3		
Term 4		
Overall		

Parent/carer contact made or attempted

Date	Time	Contact (with whom)	Type (phone call, home visit, letter, email, SMS)	Summary	Information Attached?

Date	Time	Contact (with whom)	Type (phone call, home visit, letter, email, SMS)	Summary	Information Attached?

Appendix 13: Attendance intervention checklist

(create a template with school name or letterhead)

Surname:
First Name:
Year:
Aboriginal (yes) (no)
Attendance data collected: (refer to electronic information (e.g. <i>SIS Lesson Attendance</i>) and date ranges)

School strategies implemented to date:

(Not all strategies will be appropriate. Tick and date box for each time implemented.)

Strategies	Implemented
• Telephone call(s) to parents	
• Letter(s) to parents	
• Youth Worker/School Based Community Liaison Officer home visit(s) and engaged with family	
• AIEO home visit(s) and engaged with family	
• Teacher and/or other staff home visit(s)	
• Administration home visit(s)	
• Attendance reward system consistently applied	
• Parent/student attendance interview(s)	
• School case conference(s)	
• Strong Families Conference(s)	
• Interagency case conference(s)	
• Implementation of Individual Attendance Plan (IAP)	
• Teacher mentoring and close follow up of student	
• Student peer mentoring/shadowing	
• Modified or alternative education program, training, employment (and/or IEP). Indicate which.	
• School psychologist/social worker/chaplain involvement	
• Police/APLO involvement	
• Other agency involvement	
• Consultation with the district attendance coordinator	

Other strategies implemented:

Name of student's school case manager:

Appendix 14: Summary of home visits re attendance

(for use by AIEO, School Based Community Liaison Officer, Youth Worker or other officers frequently making home visits to discuss attendance related concerns.)

[illegible]

Appendix 15: Focus questions for attendance interview (parents/carers)

(reproduced with permission from the South Australian Department for Education and Children's Services)

1. What are some of the reasons that lead _____ to miss school?
2. Are there specific issues at school? Does he/she have any specific learning needs that aren't being met? Does he/she feel safe at school? What are her/his relationships like with his/her teachers?
3. Are there issues outside of school that make it difficult for _____ to get to school? Are there times when it is better or worse than others? What happens then?
4. What has been tried? Has anything been successful/resulted in some improvement?
5. What contact with the school do you have when _____ is absent? Do you contact them/do they contact you? Who from the school makes the contact? How effective/supportive is this?
6. What does the school do well in supporting you/_____?
7. Do you have any ideas about what might help to improve _____ attendance?
8. What role might the school be able to play in this?
9. How could the school better support you and _____ around his/her connection/engagement/attendance at school?
10. Is there anything else you would like the school to know?

Appendix 16: Focus questions for attendance interview (student)

(reproduced with permission from the South Australian Department for Education and Children's Services)

1. How do you feel when you are at school?
2. What makes you feel like coming to school?
3. What makes you feel like staying at home? Do you feel safe and comfortable at school?
4. What would make school a better/easier place to be? (Video question – if there was a video recording what was happening if school was a better place and we sat down to watch the tape, what would we see happening? What would be different to right now?).
5. When you are away and tell the school you are sick, are you really sick? How sick do you have to be for you to stay home?
6. When Mum/parent/caregiver tells us you are away for family reasons what is that really about? Can you give us some examples of what might be a family reason?
7. How happy are you with your life right now? If you were to put it on a scale between 1 and 10 where would you be right now? What might it take to move you up a bit? If a miracle happened tonight and you were to feel really good about your life what would that be like? What would be different to right now?
8. What would you like to do in a group? Are there any particular issues/topics that you would like to find out more about/talk to others about? Examples:
 - Dealing with worries.
 - Getting along with other people
 - Solving/sorting out fights.
 - How to relax/chill-out/look after yourself
 - Making stuff/being creative
9. Are there any issues you wouldn't want to discuss/be included in the group?
10. Would you feel more comfortable if the group was all girls or all boys?
11. Is there anything else you would like to tell us? That you would like the school to know?

Appendix 17: Identification of factors in non-attendance

The following checklist is used in the Canning and Goldfields Education Districts but was originally devised by Felicity Jack and Micheline Gador for the 1981 Victorian Conference on School Non-Attendance. It has the capacity to yield valuable information as to the factors underlying a student's non-attendance, which is vital if appropriate programs and strategies are to be implemented.

The checklist is divided into three broad and overlapping areas:

- the student;
- the student's family; and
- the school and its environment.

The student

Pattern of absences

- When did the absences start?
- What is the duration of absences?
- Are they particular days of the week or on days when particular classes are taught?
- Does the student absent himself or herself alone or in the company of other students?
- Have parents at any time made any attempt to explain or to excuse absences (e.g. for sickness)?
- Has any contact been made with the family and, if so, what was the response?

Academic performance

- Is the student having particular problems in certain subjects?
- What is his or her overall performance level?
- Has there been a deterioration in the student's work or in his or her attitude to it?
- What support or encouragement has the student been given?
- Is the work at a level which the student can understand?
- Is it sufficiently stimulating in content and presentation?

Academic potential

- Does the student have particular learning problems which undermine his or her confidence and self-esteem, or which make school work particularly difficult?
- What are the student's own expectations of his or her ability?
- Are they unrealistic (i.e. is the student apparently over or under-estimating his/her ability?). In such cases, how have teachers and parents handled this?
- Does the student appear to be working at an appropriate level or are there factors inhibiting his or her working to full potential, such as social or emotional problems?

Social integration within the school: peer relations

- Is the student isolated from peers?
- Are his or her friends of a similar age, older or younger?
- Is he or she involved in unstable relationships, or a member of a highly competitive or an anti-social group?
- Are friendships satisfying or is the student drifting into relationships with other rejected students?
- Has social integration been disturbed by illness, frequent or traumatic changes of school, general social immaturity, personality factors (e.g. depression, excessive anxiety, withdrawal)?
- What facilities are there within the school for helping the student develop social skills (e.g. pastoral care, cross-age tutoring, peer counselling, social-skill orientated electives, camps and recreational clubs)?

Social integration within the school: staff/student relations?

- Have disagreements or personality clashes occurred between the young person and staff over problems such as discipline or teaching methods?
- Does the student appear to feel a lack of encouragement from staff?
- Does he or she appear to feel 'put down' or constantly scapegoated?
- Does the student appear to feel he or she is not given a fair hearing?
- Does the student have any particular reasons for disagreeing with a school rule?

- Is the student testing staff and his or her personal boundaries by engaging in conflict with the school?

Social integration outside the school

- How important and influential for the student are outside relationships or recreational interests? What form of influence do they provide?
- Do outside interests and hobbies, such as computer games, motor bikes, fishing or hunting compete with school for priority?
- Does the student have close friendships with older, unemployed people?
- Has the student a job, either officially if over 15, or unofficially at a younger age?

The student's family

- Family composition and dynamics?
- Is the child needed to help around the house, with younger children, to look after a sick adult or to provide company for another family member?
- What is the family's general state of health?
- Does any family member suffer from a disability?
- Is the student often fatigued?
- What is the pattern of organisation at home?
- Family socio-economic situation?
- Are parents employed or unemployed?
- Is the family in permanent or temporary accommodation (such as a caravan or refuge)?
- Does the family have money for clothes, books or excursions?
- Is the student under peer pressure to conform with regard to clothes and so on?
- Does the student come from a single-parent home where pressure to meet the child's needs falls to one parent only?
- Does one parent carry the bulk of the parenting load in a two-parent family?
- Are relationships at home tense, angry, unconcerned, overburdened or tenuous?

The school and its environment

- How relevant is the school curriculum to the student's life choices and job expectations?
- How geared is the school's curriculum to the needs of its students?
- How much choice is available in the curriculum and at what age does this choice become available?
- How relevant is the curriculum to the actual social and geographic situation of its students?
- Are there opportunities for social service activities?
- What other non-academic programs are organised (e.g. courses in social survival skills, sports and recreational activities, camping programs)?
- If these exist, how broad is their appeal and how are students encouraged to participate?
- What are the career goals of the students?
- What does the school do to help students define these goals, and are students being helped to work towards these goals realistically?
- What is the relationship of the student body to the school administration?
- To what extent does the school as a whole have shared goals and a common purpose?
- To what extent are school rules relevant to the students and staff, and how convinced are both students and staff of their relevance?
- Are there particular rules which are a constant source of conflict with students and consequently of frustration to staff?
- What are the decision-making processes within the school and how involved are staff, students and parents in these?

Appendix 18: Attendance/behaviour rating profile

Student name..... Year level Date

Teacher's name Subject

Please circle the response which best describes the above student in the following areas.

N = Never, S = Sometimes, U = Usually, O = Often, A = Always

This student:

1. Comes to school	N	S	U	O	A
2. Comes to your lessons	N	S	U	O	A
3. Arrives on time for class	N	S	U	O	A
4. Brings necessary equipment for class	N	S	U	O	A
5. Does untidy, rushed work	N	S	U	O	A
6. Loses work, text books, stationery	N	S	U	O	A
7. Completes class work	N	S	U	O	A
8. Completes homework	N	S	U	O	A
9. Remains in seat when required	N	S	U	O	A
10. Remains on task during a) independent work	N	S	U	O	A
b) structured activities	N	S	U	O	A
11. Raises hand instead of calling out	N	S	U	O	A
12. Engages in negative self-talk, , 'I can't.', 'I'm useless'	N	S	U	O	A
13. Fidgets and is restless	N	S	U	O	A
14. Prefers to spend free time/breaks with teacher	N	S	U	O	A
15. Complains of injury/illness	N	S	U	O	A
16. Always seeking extra help/repeated instructions	N	S	U	O	A
17. Interferes with other's activities	N	S	U	O	A

18. Easily distracted	N	S	U	O	A
19. Interrupts, butts in	N	S	U	O	A
20. Takes turns, shares	N	S	U	O	A
21. Initiates conversations	N	S	U	O	A
22. Able to handle criticism	N	S	U	O	A
23. Blames others, refuses to admit own behaviour	N	S	U	O	A
24. Accepts consequences for own behaviour	N	S	U	O	A
25. Persists in all tasks despite difficulty	N	S	U	O	A
26. Able to handle frustration	N	S	U	O	A
27. Able to handle/accept changes in routine	N	S	U	O	A
28. Isolates self from others	N	S	U	O	A
29. Shows interest in learning activities	N	S	U	O	A
30. Able to resolve conflict appropriately	N	S	U	O	A
31. Appears unaccepted by peers	N	S	U	O	A
32. Is uncooperative, slow to follow instructions	N	S	U	O	A
33. Is hostile to teacher attempts to help	N	S	U	O	A
34. Commences work straight away	N	S	U	O	A
35. Is quarrelsome, answers back	N	S	U	O	A
36. Follows instructions without arguing	N	S	U	O	A
37. Loses temper, unpredictable behaviour (tantrums)	N	S	U	O	A
38. Teases others, name calling, put downs	N	S	U	O	A
39. Is verbally aggressive, threatens, swears, bullies	N	S	U	O	A
40. Is physically aggressive – spitting, tripping, pushing	N	S	U	O	A
41. Is violent to others – hitting, kicking, fighting	N	S	U	O	A
42. Respects others' property	N	S	U	O	A

Any further comments:

Appendix 19: Simple documented individual attendance plan

(create a template with school name or letterhead)

(May be used as a guide by schools when conducting an attendance interview.)

Name:.....

Year:.....

Long-term goal:.....

Targets for now:

1.....

2.....

3.....

How will we know? (Describe indicators of achievement and ways of implementing them, stated clearly and simply, e.g. 'We'll keep a record of your attendance on a chart.')

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Partners: (Who will help?)

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Strategies/timeframes: (What will the student do and by when?)

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What will the teacher/AIEO/others do and by when?

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.....
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What will the parents/carers do and by when?

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Who else and by when?

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When will we talk about what's happening? (Describe who will meet with the student and when, e.g. 'The AIEO will meet with you for 5 minutes at 2 pm every day.' or 'The Year Coordinator will discuss your issues with you every Friday morning in her office.')

.....

.....

How will we celebrate? (Describe short-term and long-term incentives. These should be done in consultation with the student and be what he/she agrees to, e.g. 'When you reach your goal each week, you have an hour on the computer.' or 'When you achieve your attendance goal, you will receive a School Attendance Medal.' These rewards are usually part of the school's Attendance Improvement Plan.)

.....

.....

Review: (Set a time to review progress and state who will do this.)

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What is the next goal?

.....

.....

Name:..... Signature:..... Date:.....

Name:..... Signature:..... Date:.....

Name:..... Signature:..... Date:.....

Name:..... Signature:..... Date:.....

Source: Adapted from What Works. The Works Program

Appendix 20: Simple individual attendance plan

(create a template with school name or letterhead)

Student Name:	Year:
Parents/Carers:	Teacher:

Discussion pointers:

- ✓ Student strengths
- ✓ Concerns (attendance and others identified)
- ✓ General consequences of non-attendance (school and in life)
- ✓ Possible positive reinforcement (school and home) for improved attendance
- ✓ Effective strategies already in place
- ✓ Ways of monitoring

Discussion notes:

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Action plan:

What	Who by?	When?

Review date:

Appendix 21: Attendance case conference record and documented plan

(This record may be used where the case conference involves discussion about more than one family member and for school based or complex case conferences involving numerous agencies)

Surname:		School:		ATTENDANCE STATEMENT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline (percentage over specific timeframe, e.g. 35% Term 1 2007) Target (as above, e.g. 70% Weeks 1-4 Term 2 2007)
First name/: Year level		Date of meeting:		
First name/: Year level		Time of meeting:		
First name/: Year level		Place of meeting:		
Parent/Carers' names:		Chairperson:		
Family Support person:		Note-taker:		

PARTICIPANT	AGENCY/RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NO.	EMAIL	ATTENDANCE (describe involvement if not attending case conference)

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SPECIFIC TARGET	STRATEGIES	BY WHEN	WHO BY?	MONITORING

Attendance case conference record and documented plan

Signatures:

NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE

Review date: